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An Old Man's Story.

Many years ago, a temperance meeting was held in a certain village. A little boy, who lived in the village, was very anxious to go, and persuaded his father to take him. The boy never forgot that meeting, and he wrote the account of it years afterwards. One of the speakers at the meeting was an old man. His hair was white, and his brow furrowed with age and sorrow. When he arose to speak, he said:

"My friends, I am an old man, standing alone at the end of life's journey. Tears are in my eyes and deep sorrow is in my heart. I am without friends or home, or kindred on earth. It was not always so. Once I had a mother. With her old heart crushed with sorrow she went down to her grave. I once had a wife—a fair angel-haired creature as ever smiled in an earthly home. Her blue eyes grew dim as the floods of sorrow washed away its brightness, and her tender heart I wrung till every fibre was broken. I once had a noble boy, but he was driven from the ruins of his home, and my old heart yearns to know if he yet lives. I once had a babe—a sweet, lovely babe: but these hands destroyed it, and now it liveth with him who loveth the little ones. Do not spurn me, my friends," continued the old man. There is light in my evening sky. The spirit of my mother rejoices over the return of a prodigal son. The injured wife smiles upon him who turns back again to virtue and honor. The child-angel visits me at nightfall, and I seem to feel his tiny hands upon my feverish cheek. My brave boy, if he yet lives, would forgive the sorrowing old man for treatment that drove him out in the world, and the blow that maimed him for life. God forgive me for the ruin I have brought upon all that were about me.

"I was a drunkard. From wealth and respectability, I plunged into poverty and shame. I dragged my family down with me. For years I saw the cheek of my wife grow pale, and her step grow weary. I left her alone to struggle for the children, while I was drinking and rioting at the tavern. She never complained, though she and the children often went hungry to bed.

"One New Year's night I returned late to the hut where charity had given us shelter. My wife was still up and shivering over the coals.

I demanded food. She told me there was none, and then burst into tears. I fiercely ordered her to get some. She turned her eyes sadly upon me, the tears falling fast over her pale cheek. At this moment the child in its cradle awoke, and uttered a cry of hunger, startling the despairing mother, and making new sorrow in her breaking heart.

"We have no food, James: we have had none for several days. I have nothing for the babe. O, my once kind husband, must we starve?"

"That sad, pleading face and those streaming eyes, and the feeble wail of the child maddened me; and I—yes, I struck her a fierce blow in the face, and she fell forward upon the hearth. It seemed as if all the furies of hell were raging in my bosom; and the feeling of the wrong I had committed added fuel to the flames. I had never struck my wife before, but now some terrible influence drove me on, and I stooped down as well as I could in my drunken state, and clenched both my hands in her hair.

"For mercy's sake, James!" exclaimed my wife, as she looked up into my fiendish countenance, 'you will not kill us? you will not harm Willie?' And she sprang to the cradle and grasped him in her arms.

I caught her again by the hair and dragged her to the door, and as I lifted the latch, the wind burst in with a cloud of snow. With a fiendish yell, I still dragged her on, and hurled her out amid the darkness and storm. Then with a wild laugh I closed the door and fastened it. Her pleading moans and the sharp cry of her babe mingled with the wail of the blast. But my horrible work was not yet complete.

"I turned to the bed where my oldest son was lying, snatched him from his slumbers, and against his half-awakened struggles, opened the door and thrust him out. In the agony of fear he uttered that sacred name I was no longer able to bear. He called me—FATHER! and locked his fingers in my side pocket. I could not wrench that grasp away; but with the cruelty of a fiend, I shut the door upon his arm, and seizing my knife severed it at the wrist.

"It was morning when I awoke, and the storm had ceased. I looked round to the accustomed place for my wife. As I missed her, a dim, dark scene, as of some horrible nightmare, came over me. I thought it must be a fearful dream, but involuntarily opened the outside door with a shuddering dread. As the door opened, the snow burst in, and something fell across the threshold with a dull heavy sound.

My blood shot through my veins like melted lava, and I covered my eyes to shut out the sight. It was—O God! how horrible!—it was my own loving wife and her babe, frozen to death! With true mother's love, she had bowed herself over the child to shield it, and wrapped all her clothing round it, leaving her own person exposed to the storm. She had placed her hair over the face of the child, and the sleet had frozen it to the pale cheek. The frost was white on the lids of its half-opened eyes, and upon its tiny fingers.

"I never knew what became of my brave boy."

Here the old man bowed his head and wept; and all in the house wept with him. Then in low tones of heart-broken sorrow, he continued:

"I was arrested, and for long months I was a raving maniac. When I recovered, I was sentenced to the penitentiary for ten years; but this was nothing to the tortures that I endured in my own bosom. And now I desire to spend the little remnant of my life in striving to warn others not to enter a path which has been so dark and fearful to me."

When the old man had finished, the temperance pledge was produced, and he asked the people to come forward and sign it.

The father of the boy referred to leaped from his seat, and pressed forward to sign the pledge. As he took the pen in hand, he hesitated a moment.

"Sign it, young man, sign it," said the venerable speaker. "Angels would sign it. I would write my name in blood ten thousand times, if it would undo the ruin I have wrought, and bring back my loved and lost ones."

The young man wrote, "Mortimer Hudson." The old man looked. He wiped his eyes, and looked again. His face flushed with fiery red, and then a deathlike paleness came over it.

"It is—no, it cannot be: yet how strange!" he muttered. "Pardon me, sir, but that was the name of my brave boy."

The young man trembled, and held up his left arm, from which the hand had been severed.

They looked for a moment in each other's eyes; and the old man exclaimed:

"My own, injured boy!"

The young man cried out:

"My poor, dear father!"

Then they fell upon each other's neck and wept, till it seemed as if their souls would mingle into one.

The Public Danger: Amusement.

BY REV. LEONARD BACON, D. D.

The moral dangers incident to the sudden increase of our wealth are all related to each other. Perhaps the catalogue of them might be summed up in the statement that we are becoming more and more a nation of pleasure seekers. One illustration of what those moral dangers are, may be found in the passion for amusements which is increasingly characteristic of the American people.

Amusements, as such, are not intrinsically wrong. Nobody denies that amusements of some sort are necessary to human nature, burthened with labor of the hands or of the brain. Athletic and manly sports, in their place and in their measure, are to be approved and encouraged, not denounced. Whatever amusements invigorate the body, or refresh the mind, without exciting evil passions—whatever amusements help to bring refinement of manners and of feeling into social intercourse, without an overpowering tendency to frivolity or to excess—are useful as well as harmless. But when amusements become (I am not writing about children, but about grown-up persons,) an end in itself, instead of being valued as subsidiary to health and vivacity, and to useful labor—when amusement, instead of being simply a refreshment, becomes an employment—when the question is not, how to do the most work, but how to be amused most—when (for example,) the working man instead of seeking some inexpensive amusement in order that his work may be more cheerful and efficient, works, reluctantly, in order that his wages may enable him to enjoy himself at some low theatre or in some amusement more demoralizing than that — then it is that the amusement answers no good purpose.

Now, without raising any question about the particular tendency of one amusement or another, I may say—and the knowledge of all whose memory runs back far enough will sustain me in saying—that no change in the character of the American people, within the last five and twenty years, has been more obvious than the growth of a passion for amusements. Without pronouncing any judgment on the character of certain amusements once discountenanced among serious people, and regarded as hardly consistent with a profession of godliness, I may refer to the fact that within a few years a great change in that respect has been coming over what is sometimes called the religious public. Sermons have been preached, and essays by religious writers have been published, to show that we have inherited narrow views about amusements, and that such and such amusements which have been conventionally under the ban, are really harmless, and are quite consistent with the more cheerful and rational style of godliness, which, in this refined and enlightened age, we ought to cultivate. Meanwhile the zeal for amusements of all sorts spreads in every direction, and becomes more passionate.

No doubt these things may seem to some like trifles. But what if they are trifles? Even straws, floating on the surface, show the existence of a current, and which way it is setting. The growing passion in all quarters for all sorts of amusements, with the millions of money which it lavishes—this popular hunger for shows and stage plays, for the maddening excitements of the race-course and the regatta, for concerts of negro minstrelsy, for exhibitions of buffoons and jugglers—this appetite more eager and insatiable every year—indicates a growing resemblance in our national character to the character of nations that have never yet been proved capable of self-government. A free people, conscious of the grand responsibility involved in political liberty, will naturally be a grave and earnest people as our fathers were; and when we see such a people becoming frivolous, hungering after public amusements, eager to be tickled with shows, taking billiard-players for heroes, and putting prize-fighters into Congress, the change is proof of degeneracy rather than of true advancement, and is ominous of decay in the manly qualities by which self-government must be achieved and without which it cannot be maintained.

One element in this new popular mania deserves a more particular notice. As I have already suggested, the passion for amusements is, conspicuously, a passion for public amusements. There was a time when our people, if they wanted amusement, did not find it impracticable to amuse themselves at home; and when the thought of home was intimately blended with all their choicest pleasures. I do not mean that they had no social amusements for young or old. In the old time, many a village tavern had its bar room; and there were "sleigh rides" as well as "huskings" and "quiltings." But in those times (as it seems to an old man's memory) home was not merely a place where the family was boarded and lodged, and where the domestic drudgery was performed; it was a place to live in—the center of affection, and hope, and of happiness, as well as of care. Is it just so now? As we advance in civilization, is there not among the masses of our people, especially in cities and populous villages, a feeling that if they would enjoy themselves they must go away from home? Among those who live by their daily or monthly wages, are there not many who expend upon amusements, away from home, the time and money that might have made their homes attractive and happy? Are there not many young men in our large towns—clerks, apprentices, journeymen mechanics—who are drawn into giving, out of their scanty means, for the support of public amusements, the time which they might better occupy with the acquisition of knowledge, or with inexpensive and wholesome pleasures, and the money which if saved might make them prosperous in after years?

Not long ago, I heard of a thriving manufacturer in Connecticut, whose establishment is at a somewhat inconvenient distance from any manufacturing center, and from the line of any existing railroad, and who insists on keeping it in that out of the way place, because (he says) his workmen and their families are better off where they are, more contented, more thrifty in their habits, and every way happier, and their labor is worth more to him as well as to them, than if they were constantly tempted to spend their wages and their time in abortive efforts to enjoy themselves. When I heard about him, his boast was, and his joy, that the strolling theatrical companies, and the banjo performers, and other vagabonds with burnt cork on their faces, and the traveling detachments sent out by the great showman seeking whom he may devour, and the sensation lecturers, and the women's-rights agitators, (those in petticoats and those in pantaloons—the alto voices and the basso) had not yet found their way to his happy village—happy in its obscurity. He thought it more profitable for him to bear the continued and growing expense of cartage to and from a railroad station miles away, than to encourage a new railroad which, with its new facility of access to the centers of traffic, would soon bring upon his workmen and their families the disturbing and impoverishing influence of the *furor* for public amusement so prevalent in more populous and more central villages. He dreads the prospect of having all his efforts for the comfort and the mental and moral improvement of his people frustrated by the coming in of what he regards as adverse influences.

I do not know who the gentleman is who was thus described to me, nor where he lives; and if I knew I would not tell lest I should be the means of informing the players, and the jugglers, and the "clog-dancers," and the "skatorial queens," and the "combination troupes," and all the rest of the "*artistes*" who cater to the amusement of the weary and long suffering public, that there is one place in old Connecticut where they have not yet tried their skill—one happy valley, like that of Rasselas, which they have not yet invaded. But I submit that there is good sense in that gentleman's theory of what is for the thrift and happiness of the people whom he employs; and that his policy is worthy of consideration. Are there not other means of making people happy—other methods of social enjoyment—other amusements, if necessary—far less costly, and at the same time far more effective for all legitimate uses, than the most of those public amusements on which so much is expended in our cities and larger villages?

One thought more. Life in this world, and under these human responsibilities, means business—earnest, hearty work as under the eye of God; and just so far as any man or woman lives for amusement, so far there is a waste or loss of life.

Internal Improvements.

I ventured last year upon the suggestion that in withholding her aid and countenance from great public enterprise the state was retarding her own development, limiting, if not loosing her active population, and damaging her industrial and financial prosperity. I am aware that many differ with me in that opinion. This is to be expected. Men of fortune whose taxes amount to large sums, are apt to fear that without constitutional check the people would be reckless of expenditure, and those who have struggled through difficulties and by hard earings and hard savings have gained a comfortable competency are naturally cautious. But there is courage without rashness, and caution without timidity. It is not necessary to open the Treasury to plunder, or to expose the State to be swept to financial ruin by a sudden burst of enthusiasm or temptation. The constitutional restriction might, at least, be so modified that the States would not be absolutely debarred from giving any encouragement by her credit to measures vital to her prosperity. It would be entirely easy to provide that the State should be perfectly secured against loss or the actual payment of a dollar. No matter if in these measures some private interests were advanced, if by so doing the public interests were ten fold more so. This system is safer, more effective, less expensive than to throw the burden upon towns, as we do now. The State guarantees would be more wisely granted, and would have a more commanding credit.

One reason the State has so little private wealth is because she has not fostered public enterprise, and she now relies upon this private wealth to carry on her most momentous concerns. So we move in a perpetual circle, without advance. There can be no enthusiasm for a State while these things are so. Our people want something to do. Either capital or employment every man must have. Our young men do not ask aid; they ask opportunity. Because they cannot find it here, they seek it elsewhere. We have lands to be sure, but scarcely any encouragement to work them. It is our duty to adopt a policy which will open the avenues of industry, and quicken all the currents of life. This is the only saving, nay, the only safe course.

Nor does the fact that we have our war debt upon us afford anything but an additional argument in favor of this liberality. Capitalists will not distrust the credit of a State which is full of industry and life, vigorously pushing forward its public enterprises, opening its resources, and laying a basis for future stability. Rather would they discredit a State which barely trying to hold its own, shrinks from day to day, whose highest anxiety is to pay its debts, instead of entering with a strong hand upon measures which would leave the debts a trifle. — *From Gov. Chamberlain's annual address.*

Our First Pacific Railroad.

BY ALBERT D. RICHARDSON.

I say our "first" road, because children now living will see four or five railways completed from the Mississippi to the Pacific.

THREE BELTS OF STATES.

Our new states west of the Great River, naturally divide themselves into three belts or tiers. The northern embraces Minnesota, Dacotah, Montana, Idaho, Washington and Oregon.

The southern includes the Indian Territory, New Mexico and Arizona.

The central belt, comprises Iowa and Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas, Colorado, Nevada, Utah and California. It is far more populous than the other two combined. Along it used to be the track of the buffaloes, and the Indians. Along it were beaten the first trails of civilization by Mormon and California emigrants. Here nature has established the centers of population, the routes of travel, the lines of commercial, the pathway of empire.

IOWA AND MISSOURI.

Iowa, nearly prairie, is well watered and timbered, rich in soil, and has a population of three quarters of a million.

Missouri, half as large as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, with a pleasant climate and most fertile soil: with more land adapted to the grape than the aggregate vineyards of France: with boundless treasures of timber, marble, iron and lead—is the Empire State of the interior—indeed of the whole Union, with the possible exception of California. Her population is about a million and three quarters.

KANSAS, NEBRASKA AND COLORADO.

Kansas, though poorer in timber and minerals, is the richest and fairest of our *prairie* states. Twelve years of free labor, have converted her from a solitude, into a great commonwealth with a quarter of a million of people.

Nebraska, also all prairie though hardly so rich in soil, is an excellent agricultural state. Her population is forty or fifty thousand.

In Western Kansas and Nebraska, the prairie soil becomes more and more sandy until near the borders of Colorado, it merges into one vast sand desert. From this point to the Pacific, there is little agriculture without irrigation. But where water is once turned on, the seemingly sterile earth yields with surprising abundance.

In central Colorado, the Rocky Mountains rise right up like a wall, from gently rolling deserts to the hight of two or three thousand feet. The mountain view from Denver is probably finer than from any other considerable town in the world.

Colorado, begun, in 1859, has rich treasures of gold, and impatiently waits the Pacific Railway to develop them. Its population is twenty-five thousand.

UTAH AND NEVADA.

Utah has a hundred thousand people, ninety-nine one hundredths of them Mormons. It is made up of snowy mountains with rich valleys and basins between, admirably adapted to agriculture, and to fruit. The great Salt Lake, 130 miles long, is so dense that at low water three gallons will produce one gallon of pure salt. Salt Lake city, with a population of nearly twenty thousand, is the largest town between Leavenworth and San Francisco. It consists of low adobe sun-dried-brick houses covered with trees and vines. Rills of clear water thread the streets, and in the distance green meadows, with shining lakelets and brooks stretch off toward the all encircling mountains.

Nevada is dreariest and barrenest of all our states, except Idaho. It is composed of mountains, and ashen hills, and deserts, without tree, shrub, or any green thing, save in a few of the valleys. But though it had no white inhabitants nine years ago, its great mineral vein, known as the Comstock Lode, though only five miles long, has already yielded sixty millions of dollars in silver.

THE SIERRA NEVADAS AND CALIFORNIA.

In Western Nevada, rise the grand Sierra Nevadas—by far the most striking mountains on our continent. Upon their summit glitters Tabor, a wonderful little lake, more than a mile above sea level. It is so perfectly transparent, that the bottom is seen with distinctness at the depth of nearly a hundred feet. It is far grander and lovelier than Lake George. Already, two large hotels are built near it, and it is a favorite summer resort for the Californians. The state line between Nevada and California crosses it.

California, what can I say of it in a single paragraph? The great metropolis, more like New York than any other American city, which has sprung up on barren sand hills, in eighteen years, in a climate so genial, that thin clothing is never worn, though roses bloom in December, and grapes are fresh on the tables for six months of the year; the kindly air, where fig, orange and pomegranate grow side by side with apple, pear and cherry; the great vineyard which yet will supply the whole world; the prolific soil, whose wheat already feeds dusky peoples in China and Japan, and our own citizens even in the Genessee Valleys: the gold mines which yield fifty millions a year; the fifty thousand Chinese who swarm in the young state, leaving their women and children at home, and even shipping their dead five thousand miles home to be buried; the Geysers, where hot water and steam shoot up from the earth in a thousand places, roaring, like a huge steam ship blowing off her steam: the wonderful Yosemite Valley where Switzerland is compressed into an area of ten miles, where stands a waterfall, sixteen times higher than Niagara and twelve times higher than Bunker Hill Monument, and where solid mountains of granite rise perpendicularly, without a seam, for three quarters of a mile; the big trees, older than the Christian Era and with trunks 25 and 30 feet in diameter: to speak fitly of all these would fill a volume.

THE GREAT RAILWAY.

Along these great states of the future, runs our first Pacific railroad. The main stem starts from Omaha, Nebraska, but three Kansas forks leave the Missouri, respectively at Atchison, Leavenworth and Wyandott. The present western end, is Sacramento, where passengers take river steamers for San Francisco, 120 miles. But the ultimate terminus will be Oakland, two miles across the bay from San Francisco.

HIGHTS AND GRADES.

The road runs through almost every variety of climate and country. Its hights above sea level are:

Omaha,	[illegible] feet.
Eastern base Rocky Mountains,	[illegible] "
Highest summit Rocky Mountains,	[illegible] "
Salt Lake City,	[illegible] "
Summit of Sierra Nevada,	[illegible] "

On the California end, coming Eastward up the Sierras, the track rises seven thousand feet in less than a hundred miles. But so favorable a route has been found, that the heaviest grade (116 feet to the mile, is only three miles long. No other grade exceeds 105 feet to the mile.

On the Nebraska end going westward upon the valley Platte for more than five hundred miles, the track follows a natural grade of less than seven feet to the mile.

MUNIFICENT HELP OF THE GOVERNMENT.

The road is built by two distinct corporations. The Union Pacific Company composed of New York and Boston capitalists, starts from Omaha westward. The Central Pacific, made up of California capitalists, comes from Sacramento eastward. Each company receives from the Government, in United States bonds, nominally as a loan, but actually a gift, sixteen thousand dollars for every mile finished, where the route is level and the grading light; thirty-two thousand for every mile along the foot-hills, and forty-eight thousand for every mile in the mountains, where heavy grading is required. In addition to this, each company is authorized to issue and sell its own bonds, for the same amounts per mile. These bonds, as a mortgage upon the road, have priority over its indebtedness to the government. It is the most munificent endowment any public work ever received, but no greater than the enterprise deserves.

PROGRESS ALREADY MADE.

Nearly twenty thousand laborers are employed upon the main stem. The distance from Omaha to San Francisco is about seventeen hundred miles. On this end the locomotive going westward, has reached the Rocky Mountains in Colorado. The one coming eastward from Sacramento has penetrated the Sierra Nevadas into the state of Nevada.

The most rapid railway building in the world, has been done along the line. One mile a day, was formerly considered fast track-laying; but here two miles and even two and a half, have been laid for weeks together. About one thousand miles remain to be constructed.

TO BE COMPLETED IN THREE YEARS.

In 1870, the gap will be closed, and the great highway opened from Western Europe to the Celestial Empire and the farthest Indies. Already the largest and finest steamers in the world connect with the western terminus, plying monthly each way between San Francisco, China and Japan. They are of American build and ownership; the largest are of nearly 5000 tons burden, and have cost about one million dollars apiece.

As far as completed, both ends of the road are choked with passengers and freight and pay enormous profits. And I think there is no man living who fully comprehends what the value of the great thoroughfare will be to us when the wanting link is supplied, in developing our gold and silver resources, which already turn out a hundred millions per year, and in ten years thereafter, will turn out five hundred millions annually; in building up our domestic commerce, and in giving us the carrying trade of the world.

THE MIRACLES OF MODERN SCIENCE.

In three years it will be but a week's journey from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Out in the very heart of the American desert, every morning will see passengers from Hong Kong and San Francisco exchanging greeting and newspapers with passengers from London and New York, while their meeting trains are stopping for breakfast. Our daily journals will yet give us by Pacific Cable despatches only a few hours old from the islands of the sea, and the Central Flowery Kingdom. These miracles of modern science, how they abolish time and space, like the flaming vision of the Apocalypse:

"And I saw a mighty angel. . . clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. And he set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot upon the earth and sware by Him that liveth that *time should be no more.*"

Mrs. Cunningham, tried some years since for the murder of Dr. Burdell, in New York, is endeavoring, in the California courts, to get a divorce from a man named Hyde, whom she married in that State.

For the Young Folks.

Houseless By Night.

"Hark!" exclaimed Harry suddenly; "There's Hector growling and scratching at the side door. Run and let him in, Susie."

Susie jumped up and opened the door, and in bounded a huge black dog.

"Lie down Hector! Down with you sir!" cried Harry, as the dog leaped upon him and rested two fore paws on his shoulder.

But Hector would not lie down. He commenced fawning on Harry and pulling at the lappels of his jacket, as if he had something to tell him.

"For shame, Hector. Your paws are all wet. You've covered me with snow. Down, I tell you."

Thus repulsed, the dog dropped down and turned to Charlie. He seized Charlie's coat between his jaws, and began to pull it gently. Every now and then, he would utter a low plaintive growl, looking earnestly all the time in Charlie's face.

"He's got something out doors for you," said Susie. "Perhaps it's a woodchuck."

"Let's go and see," exclaimed Harry starting up.

When Hector saw the boys rise to their feet, his delight was evident. He ran to the hall, where their caps and tippets were hanging, and stood wagging his tail, and now and then giving a sharp, short bark, while they put them on.

"Where are you going, boys?" asked their mother, coming in at that moment. "It's getting near bed-time, Harry."

"I know it mother, but Hector has found something in the snow. We think it's a woodchuck, and we are going out, just one minute to see."

"Well, hurry back. It's very cold. Shut the door tight after you, or the snow will blow into the entry."

Charlie and Harry ran after the dog, who bounded through the yard so fast they could scarcely keep up with him. Outside the gate, and down the open road he led them on the run. They were full a quarter of a mile down the road, before they stopped to take breath.

There was a little piece of wood here, through which the road ran to the village, two miles distant. Hector bounded in among the trees, but stopped when he found the boys did not follow.

"I'm not going any farther to-night, old fellow," said Charlie. "It's too dark to go hunting."

At this Hector's excitement redoubled. He ran back to the boys, and then forward, a few steps, turning back his head to see if they followed him. At last he came and crouched at Harry's feet, and uttered a low, coaxing whine, which said as plainly as words could have done:

"Please come a little farther."

"Let's go in and see what he has got," said Harry. "It isn't dark, for there's a moon behind the snow-clouds, and we can see well enough."

So they went in after Hector. Not more than three or four yards, before they saw two human figures in the snow. The dog leaped forward and commenced licking the hands of a little boy, who sat near the trunk of a tree, with the head of a smaller boy lying in his lap.

"Who are you?" asked Harry, in surprise, when he saw them.

"I'm so cold," answered the boy, in a voice broken by sobs, "and Otto is going to sleep so sound I can't wake him up."

"They are freezing to death, Harry," cried Charlie. "People always grow sleepy when they freeze. We must help them up out of the snow, and get them home quick."

Harry seized the boy who had spoken, under both arms and pulled him upon his feet, while Charlie lifted the other, who was almost insensible, and only murmured faintly when he was raised up.

The older of the two, could scarcely stand, but staggered about, as if his feet and legs were quite numb.

"Take hold of my arm," said Harry, "and we'll get to a fire in two minutes. Can you manage with the other fellow, Charlie?"

"I guess so, with Hector's help," he answered. "Run to the house as fast as you can, and ask some one to meet me."

Harry tucked the boy's hand under his arm, and started off briskly, half dragging him along over the snow.—Charlie had more trouble with his charge, for though the boy was not heavy, he was rather too large for Charlie to carry. So he called Hector, and placing the helpless child on the dog's back he held him on with both hands while Hector, as if he knew exactly what was expected of him, walked slowly and carefully towards the house.

Before they were half way there, however, Charlie's father met them with a lantern, and taking the half-frozen child in his arms, carried him within doors.

The eldest boy, whose name was Fritz, was soon made comfortable, and was able to eat some hot supper, and tell their story. Poor little Otto, revived after a while, and at length was able to sit up and comprehend where he was.

Then Fritz told how they came out in the storm. They were two little street musicians, who played each a violin, and got pennies from people for their music. But a cross old Jew was their master, who furnished them and a dozen other boys, with their instruments, and then took from them at night all they earned during the day, giving them in return their supper and lodging, and a meagre breakfast.

"And if we didn't get so many pennies every night, he gave us nothing at all to eat," said Fritz. "So Otto and me agreed to run into the country this Christmas time. We didn't think it bad to take our violins with us, because our master was so cruel, and we had paid the worth of them many times over. We told no one about it, except one of the boys, who carried a hand organ, and he would have come with us, if we had waited till after Christmas. His organ was too heavy to carry, on such a long tramp, and he could take such a handful of pennies in the holidays, that he wanted to wait, that he might have them to come away with. So Otto and I came by ourselves. We have been a week on the road now, playing our violins all the way, but we didn't get many pennies, and to-night we had no supper, and no money to pay for lodging, and so we got cold and hungry and lost our way in the wood. We used to have a nice Christmas once," added Fritz, "when my father and mother were alive, but they died when Otto was very little, and then we lived in the streets, till the Jew picked us up, and taught us to play."

Poor little boys! They were homeless wanderers indeed, and that night they had a good supper and a warm bed, the first for a long time.

Mr. Mason kept them till after Christmas and Mrs. Mason fitted them out each with a warm suit of cloths for a Christmas present.

And when the New Year began they had found homes in farm houses not so far apart but they could see each other often. They are now learning to be farmers, and I hope they will grow up good and useful men. As for Hector, he has ever since been the hero of the story, of how he saved the lives of two houseless little boys who were lost in the snow.—*Congregationalist.*

THREE HOURS COMBAT WITH AN ELEPHANT.—The particulars of a terrible fight with Tippoo Sahib, the well-known elephant, now 36 years old and weighing 10,000 pounds, which occured at Connersville, Ind., are thus related by the Cincinnati Commercial:

The battle resulted from a change in his keepers. Frank Nash, his keeper for ten years, was supplanted by Charles Johnson, formerly of Barnum's Menagerie. The elephant was in particularly bad humor with all mankind. He would allow nobody in his quarters, striking at every intruder with his trunk and tusks most viciously. On Tuesday morning last at ten o'clock the combat opened. The new keeper, with nine assistants, had fully equipped himself with chains and cables for tying, and spears and pitchforks for subduing Tippoo. The first thing done was to fasten a brickbat to the end of a rope and throw it over the end of the tusk-chain, which latter is fastened to one leg and one tusk. By means of this rope a twenty-ton cable chain, formerly used to subdue the famous Hannibal, was slip-noosed around the tusk.

Next an excavation three feet deep was made under the sill of the house, and while the elephant's attention was attracted to the other side of the room by a pail of water poured into his trough the cable chain was passed through the excavation and fastened to heavy stakes outside. All this time the infuriated monster struck at all around him with terrible ferocity, and tugged at his chain with incredible momentum. The next thing accomplished was the snaring of his hind legs. This was consummated by the slinging of fresh ropes around those two stately pillars of elephant flesh and bone, and muscle, and finally, by stealthy strategy of the keeper and another man, these ropes were fastened to stumps outside. The elephant was now sufficiently pinioned to allow the order "charge pitchforks" to be given. The men, armed with those ugly implements of offence, plunged them into the rampaging beast, taking care of course, to avoid penetrating his eyes or joints. The tenderest spot in an elephant is just behind the fore legs, and that locality was prodded most unmercifully.

By means of a hooked spear sunk in his back Tippoo was brought to his knees, but he surged up again with such awful strength that he swept his tormentors off their feet, and made his chain whistle like fiddle strings. After an hour's fighting he was down on his side, but for two hours longer he tugged at his chains with frenzied obstinacy. He pulled so hard at times that his hind legs were straight out behind him, and three feet from the ground. At the end of the three hours the giant gave in by trumpeting, which is the elephant way of crying enough. The moment this peculiar cry was heard the battle ceased. The keeper made Tippo get up and lie down a number of times, and he was as obedient to the word of command as a gentle pony. The animal was then groomed and rubbed off with whisky. He allowed all manner of liberties without so much as flapping an ear. He was a subjugated elephant. At one stage of the fight the dog Jack, (a companion of the elephant,) thought some of the tieing business foul play. He flew upon Johnson's back and tried to sink his fangs into his neck, but was pulled off and dragged out of the room. Jack evidently sympathized with his big friend.

A good story is told at the expense of two brothers in Whateley, who owned a dog, and had had his life threatened because he wasn't licensed. The other day, when the constable called to kill the animal, one of the wives on her own responsibility paid for a license, while at the same time her husband was paying for one at the town clerk's office. The best of the joke, however, came out at night, when the other brother came home with the intelligence that he had killed the dog. A double license, even, didn't save him.

Let children play, like the birds and lambs. They can't help it. "Why, Charles," said a mother, whose little boy was rolling heels over head on the carpet, "what is the matter with you? Can't you keep still?" "No, ma,' he replied, taking another turn, "I can't stop, I'm so chock full of teeter!"

Jeff. Davis was looking in very good health at New Orleans, New Year's day and is going up to his old Mississippi plantation, now owned and run by one of his "niggers." He has a wider freedom on bail for treason than as president of the confederacy, and exercise agrees with him.

Mr. Bonner, who likes to have everybody who is anybody write for the Ledger, asked Gen. Grant to become also a contributor, and that the General told him, "You may print my speeches."